

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 298063

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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, EAID, SA

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON AMERICAN JEWISH
CONGRESS SUIT TO HALT JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION ACTIVITIES
WITH SAUDI ARABIA

REF: STATE 297928

AMMAN, JIDDA PASS TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

PARIS PASS TO SOBER AND PARSKY

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE DECEMBER 18

ON SUIT FILED BY AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS DECEMBER 17

IN U.S. DISTRICT COURT TO OBTAIN AN INJUNCTION AGAINST

FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF 1974 US-SAUDI JOINT ECONOMIC

COMMISSION ACTIVITIES (REFTEL):

QUOTE JEWS SUE KISSINGER ON SAUDI JOB CURB

THE AMERICAN JEWISH CONGRESS, IN A SUIT FILED TODAY
AGAINST SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER AND THREE
OTHER CABINET MEMBERS, CHARGED THEM WITH VIOLATING THE
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF AMERICAN JEWS BY ALLOWING THEM
TO BE EXCLUDED FROM GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED PROGRAMS IN
SAUDI ARABIA.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 298063

THE SUIT ASKED FOR AN INJUNCTION FORBIDDING MR. KISSINGER

AND HIS CO-DEFENDANTS FROM CARRYING OUT A 1974 UNITED STATES-SAUDI AGREEMENT ON "COOPERATIVE MEASURES" IN ECONOMICS, TECHNOLOGY, AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION AND INDUSTRIALIZATION.

JOINING THE GROUP AND FOUR OF ITS OFFICERS AS PLAINTIFFS WERE TWO PROFESSORS, LOUIS KAPLAN OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN AND MARTIN A. WATKINS OF WEST CHESTER, PA., WHO CONTEND THEY WERE BARRED OR DETERRED FROM EMPLOYMENT IN GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED PROGRAMS IN SAUDI ARABIA BECAUSE THEY WERE JEWS.

ATTACHED TO THE COMPLAINT AS AN EXHIBIT WAS A COPY OF A TRANSLATION OF WHAT WAS DEPICTED AS A 1950 LETTER FROM THE SAUDI MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND NATIONAL ECONOMY. IT REFERS TO A ROYAL DIRECTIVE AUTHORIZING LEGATIONS TO ISSUE VISAS "TO PERSONS WHOM THE INVESTMENT COMPANIES WISH TO BRING INTO THE KINGDOM" PROVIDING THE COMPANIES GUARANTEE THAT THOSE FOR WHOM VISAS ARE SOUGHT "ARE NOT UNDESIRABLE PERSONS, IT BEING UNDERSTOOD THAT THE UNDESIRABLE PERSONS INCLUDE THE JEWS."

-- SAUDI DENIES VISA BIAS

NIZAR O. MADANI, SECOND SECRETARY AT THE SAUDI EMBASSY HERE, SAID IN A TELEPHONE INTERVIEW: "TO SAY THAT JEWS ARE NOT ISSUED VISAS IS NOT CORRECT."

HE SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA DID HAVE "SOME RESTRICTIONS" ON PERSONS TO WHOM VISAS MIGHT BE ISSUED BUT THAT JEWS WERE NOT CONSIDERED "UNDESIRABLE" SIMPLY "BECAUSE THEY ARE JEWS."

"IF THEY DECLARE THEMSELVES ZIONISTS, THAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED A PROBLEM," HE ADDED.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT, IN ITS OFFICIAL COMMENT ON THE SUIT, NOTED THE TRADITIONAL "CLOSE AND FRIENDLY" RELATION-
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PAGE 03 STATE 298063

SHIP WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND ITS BELIEF THAT THE JOINT COMMISSION ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION SET UP FOR THE 1974 AGREEMENT WAS "IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST."

IT SAID THAT THERE WERE INDEED DIFFERENCES "OVER SOME MATTERS OF POLICY" AND THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT DID NOT AGREE WITH SUCH DISCRIMINATION AND WAS "WORKING ACTIVELY" TO PROMOTE SAUDI ADHERENCE

TO WHAT IT REGARDED AS A "CLEARLY DEFINED AND UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE" OF NONDISCRIMINATION.

"THERE HAS BEEN NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AMERICAN PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN THE U.S.-SAUDI ARABIAN JOINT COMMISSION ACTIVITIES," THE STATEMENT SAID.

OTHER STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID THAT WHEN THE DEPARTMENT LEARNED OF A VISA PROBLEM WITH SAUDI ARABIA FOR A JEW OR OTHER AMERICAN CITIZEN, "WE INTERCEDE AND WE HAVE HAD SUCCESS."

A PRELIMINARY CHECK, THEY SAID, DID NOT SHOW THAT EITHER OF THE TWO PLAINTIFFS IN THE SUIT HAD INFORMED THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THEY ALSO SAID THAT THE SAUDI POLICY OF EXCLUDING JEWS HAS BEEN "GRADUALLY CHANGING" IN AN UNPUBLICIZED MANNER.

ACCORDING TO THE COMPLAINT, MR. KAPLAN APPLIED FOR EMPLOYMENT BY THE MIDWEST UNIVERSITIES CONSORTIUM FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES, INC., AS AN ADVISER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF RIYAD AND WAS TURNED DOWN, HE ALLEGED, ONLY BECAUSE HE WAS A JEW. END QUOTE.

KISSINGER

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